



BILLING CODE: 4910-9X

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Office of the Secretary

[Docket Number: OST-1995-177]

Agency Request for Renewal of a Previously Approved Collection: Disclosure of Change-of-Gauge Services

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary, Department of Transportation.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Department of Transportation (DOT) invites public comments about our intention to request the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval to renew an information collection. We are required to publish this notice in the Federal Register by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13.

DATES: Written comments should be submitted by **[insert date 60 days after date of publication in the Federal Register]**.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments (identified by DOT Docket Number OST-1995-177) through one of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- *Fax:* 1-202-493-2251
- *Mail or Hand Delivery:* Docket Management Facility; U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., West Building, Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on Federal Holidays.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Barbara Snoden, (202) 366-4834, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC, 20590.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

OMB Control Number: 2105-0538

Title: Disclosure of Code Sharing Arrangements and Long-Term Wet Leases

Type of Review: Renewal of an information collection

Abstract: Change-of-gauge service is scheduled passenger air transportation for which the operating carrier uses one single flight number even though passengers do not travel in the same aircraft from origin to destination but must change planes at an intermediate stop. In addition to one-flight-to-one-flight change-of-gauge services, change-of-gauge services can also involve aircraft changes between multiple flights on one side of the change point and one single flight on the other side. As with one-for-one change-of-gauge services, the carrier assigns a single flight number for the passenger's entire itinerary even though the passenger changes planes, but in addition, the single flight to or from the exchange point itself has multiple numbers, one for each segment with which it connects and one for the local market in which it operates.

The Department recognizes various public benefits that can flow from change-of-gauge services, such as a lowered likelihood of missed connections. However, although change-of-gauge flights can offer valuable consumer benefits, they can be confusing and misleading unless consumers are given reasonable and timely notice that they will be required to change planes during their journey.

Section 41712 of Title 49 of the U.S. code authorizes the Department to decide if a U.S. air carrier or foreign air carrier or ticket agent (including travel agents) has engaged in unfair or deceptive practices. Under this authority, the Department has adopted various regulations and policies to prevent unfair or deceptive practices or unfair methods of competition. The Department requires as a matter of policy that customers be given notice of aircraft changes for change-of-gauge flights. (See Department Order 89-1-31, page 5.) The Department proposed to adopt the extant regulations, however, because it was not convinced that these rules and policies resulted in effective disclosure all of the time.

Respondents: All U.S. air carriers, foreign air carriers, computer reservations systems (CRSs), and travel agents doing business in the United States, and the traveling public.

Number of Respondents: 16,000, excluding travelers.

Frequency: At 15 seconds per call and an average of 1.5 calls per trip, a total of 22.5 seconds per respondent or traveler, for the approximately 33% of estimated change-of-gauge itineraries that involve personal contact.

Total Annual Burden: Annual reporting burden for this data collection is estimated at 76,313 hours for all travel agents and airline ticket agents, based on 15 seconds per phone call and an average of 1.5 phone calls per trip, for the approximately 33% of estimated change-of-gauge itineraries that involve personal contact. Most of this data collection (third party notification) is accomplished through highly automated computerized systems.

PUBLIC COMMENTS INVITED: You are asked to comment on any aspect of this information collection, including (a) whether the proposed collection of information is

necessary for the Department's performance; (b) the accuracy of the estimated burden; (c) ways for the Department to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collection; and (d) ways that the burden could be minimized without reducing the quality of the collected information.

AUTHORITY: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995; 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, as amended; and 49 CFR 1:48.

Issued in Washington, DC on July 31, 2012

Todd M. Homan

Director, Office of Aviation Analysis

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